Overview of Senior Assessment and Tertiary Entrance in Australia and other countries

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The aim of this text is to offer an overview of senior assessment and tertiary entrance procedures in Australia and other countries.

Senior secondary assessment systems and tertiary entrance arrangements are often diverse, both within systems and between different systems. Generalisations about secondary assessment and tertiary entrance systems are perilous, and inevitably inaccurate and incomplete to some degree. Nonetheless there is good reason for risking such generalisations in an attempt see the key characteristics of different systems and the similarities and differences between systems. It is easy to assume that the practices one is familiar with are more or less inevitable.

The following discussion attempts to generalise about different systems by describing them within a similar framework. This work has attempted to find the optimal categories for identifying the differences between systems through a set of tables. The aim of these tables is to find the categories that best register at a very high level of generality the differences between systems of senior secondary assessment and tertiary entrance.

Table 1 is an overview of the senior secondary assessment and tertiary entrance systems of some 30 countries. The table is formed around the use of examinations, tests and school-based assessments for certification and selection for tertiary entrance. It also includes a category for information other than examinations, tests and school assessments that is used for tertiary selection.

20 of the 30 systems in Table 1 have external examinations used as final or leaving examinations for secondary certification. These examinations are usually at national level. 15 of the 20 countries also use the same external examinations as part of the tertiary selection. 7 of the 20 systems using external examinations for certification also use school assessments. 11 of the 30 have tertiary selection on the basis of the examinations of particular tertiary institutions. India is the exception in Table 1. It has no state or nation-wide system of secondary certification. Tertiary selection in India is based entirely on the entrance examinations of particular institutions.

Systems that use system-wide, external examinations for certification and selection usually have few institutional entrance examinations, although Finland and Japan have external examinations for certification and a range of institutional entrance examinations. France has an examination system for certification and tertiary selection, and a range of institutional entrance examinations.

The tertiary entrance systems in Norway and Canada system are based exclusively on school assessments. Tertiary selection in the United States is based on school assessment, usually in conjunction with standardised test scores.

All of the 30 systems in Table 1 use examinations, tests or school assessments for certification and/or tertiary selection. One would expect that every tertiary selection system would have some methods of admitting students that did not involve general assessments systems, but overall it seems fair to conclude that only England, Scotland and the United States of the 30 countries in Table 1 make extensive use of other information for tertiary entry. England and Scotland use examination scores, school assessments and application dossiers for tertiary

entrance. Many tertiary institutions in the United States use school assessments, application dossiers and standardised test scores for tertiary entrance. Some tertiary institutions in the United States use school assessments and applications dossiers only for tertiary selection.

Table 2 gives a more specific description of 8 systems and the proposed English Baccalaureate.

The 'Kind of program' column in Table 2 involves the emphasis on academic and/or applied/vocational nature of the system. The International Baccalaureate is purely academic rather than vocational. Denmark and France have separate streams of academic and applied learning. England, Scotland and New Zealand offer a range a choices and the possible integration of academic and vocational studies. Hong Kong requires both academic and applied learning. The United States offers a wide range of programs of many kinds.

The 'Curriculum choice' column in Table 2 is concerned with the openness and specificity of the requirements for the completion of a senior secondary course. England has no overall requirements. Success in individual subjects is reported in that system. New Zealand contrasts with England in that there is an overall certificate award on the basis of breadth and depth requirements. There are no overall requirements for Scotland, although there are particular requirements for the Scottish Baccalaureate. There is a proposal for an English Baccalaureate (row 4) which would require 6 core subjects at a particular level.

Hong Kong requires 4 core subjects and 3 electives. France has 4 different streams with common requirements. Denmark has 12 set programs. The International Baccalaureate requires 5 groups of subjects. The US has no subject requirements, although subjects are generally recognised at different levels of difficulty. High school diplomas of specific schools or jurisdictions in the US usually have some specific graduation requirements.

The 'Cross-curricular studies' column records a common liberal studies subject in Hong Kong. There is an individual project in Denmark for graduation, and France requires an individual cross-curricular project and a group project. The International Baccalaureate requires a Theory of Knowledge Essay, a research based Extended Essay, and Creativity, Actions and Service activity.

The 'Completion requirements' recorded in column five show that there is recognition of separate subjects results and no completion requirements for senior secondary education in England and Scotland. A number of units is required for completion in New Zealand. A level of success is required in 9 subjects in France. In Hong Kong 4 core subjects and Liberal studies have to be completed. The International Baccalaureate requires a range of subjects and cross-curricular activities. There would be a set of required studies at certain levels for the proposed English Baccalaureate.

The 'Assessment mode' is school-based or internal in the US. It is both external and internal in Denmark, England, France, Hong Kong, New Zealand and Scotland. The proposed English Baccalaureate would be exclusively externally assessed.

While it is tempting to generalise about the use of assessment methods such as written examinations, projects, assignments, portfolios, oral examinations and performances in particular systems, it cannot be done satisfactorily. Some systems are more or less exclusively based on written examinations, particularly if the assessment is substantially external to the school, but some systems use system-wide projects and oral assessments as well as written assessments. Internal assessment commonly lends itself to a wider range of assessment methods than external assessment.

The assessment standards in Denmark and France are normative. The assessments in Hong Kong are standards-referenced and normative. Assessments are standards-referenced in England, the International Baccalaureate, New Zealand and Scotland. Standards in the US are determined locally with a mixture of norm and standards referencing.

There is no particular moderation of internal assessment in Denmark and France. The assessments of England, the International Baccalaureate. New Zealand and Scotland are reviewed and supervised by the accrediting or supervising agency. Social and statistical moderation are used in Hong Kong. There is no moderation of school assessment standards in the US, other than through standardised tests.

Broad grades are used for reporting assessments in England, Hong Kong, New Zealand and Scotland. There are 7 grades with a pass of grade 3 in Denmark. There is a score out of 20 in France and a score out of 45 for the International Baccalaureate.

The final secondary assessment is integrated with tertiary selection in Denmark, England, Hong Kong and New Zealand. Tertiary entrance is possible at various levels in Scotland. Completion of the French Baccalaureate is automatic entry to many tertiary courses.

The categories used in Tables 1 and 2 were chosen because they registered differences between different national systems. Table 3 uses much the same categories as Table 2 for describing the systems in Australian jurisdictions.

All of the systems in Australia integrate the academic and vocational subjects.

Completion requirements in Australian systems are usually framed in terms of the number of courses to be taken. NSW specifies a maximum number of science units. South Australia requires the study of English and mathematics. Victoria and Western Australia require the study of English.

The cross-curricular requirements seen in some systems in Table 2 are not common in Australia. Most systems require a certain breadth and depth of study. South Australia requires the production of a Personal Learning Plan, has literacy and numeracy requirements and the production of a Research Project. As well as requirements for breadth and depth, Tasmania requires the achievement of standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. A study in mathematics / science / technology and arts / language / social sciences at year 12 is required in Western Australia. Students must attain a C grade in English or be given a school-based statement of competence in literacy to complete the secondary certificate in Western Australia.

The systems in Australian Capital Territory and Queensland are school-based with some external testing. The other Australian systems have a mixture of internal and external assessment. All jurisdictions have courses which are completely school assessment with varying degrees of authority supervision.

The standards used for reporting in New South Wales and Victoria are normative. The assessments in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales and Western Australia are both normative and standards-referenced. Queensland and Tasmania give emphasis to the standards referencing of assessments. New South Wales and Tasmania give emphasis to describing levels of performance.

New South Wales and Victoria use external assessments to statistically moderate internal assessments. Queensland, Tasmania and Western Australia use statistical, social and supervised moderation in which some form of sampling of student work is reviewed by the

authority. South Australia uses social and supervised moderation without formal statistical moderation.

The Australian systems differ in the fineness of the assessments they report. Australian Capital Territory, Queensland and Tasmania report broad grades. New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia report a combination of grades and numbers.

The Characteristics of Australian Senior Secondary Certificates

Table 3 show the commonalities and the differences in the senior secondary assessment systems and certificates in different Australian jurisdictions. Tables 4 to 9 give a detailed description of the systems in individual jurisdictions.

Some commonalities

There is no separation of academic and vocational courses in Australian senior secondary certificates. Academic and vocational education can be integrated and reported on the same certificate in many ways in Australia.

There is a good deal of school-based assessment in Australia. Assessment methods tend to reflect the assessment mode. School-based assessment is used to broaden the range of skills and outcomes that can be assessed in Australia.

Subject specific courses are dominant, and there are few cross-curricular requirements in Australian senior secondary courses.

All Australian systems integrate senior secondary certification with tertiary selection through the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR). There are no institutional entrance examinations and few faculty specific examinations for tertiary entrance in Australia. (Entrance to medical school in Australia is one exception in a number of ways.) The ATAR score is the sole basis for selection into many tertiary courses in Australia, and in comparison with Britain and the United States there is little other information used for tertiary entrance in Australia.

The Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank

The ATAR aims to give individuals a score on a scale that can be compared with students taking other subjects, and students in other systems, and students from other years. The ATAR is a percentile rank (reported between 30.00 and 99.95 in intervals of 0.05) based on an aggregate of individual subject scores. The percentile rank takes into account the total age cohort, both in and out of schooling, in a system.

The ATAR is constructed by scaling the scores of individual subjects to adjust for differences in difficulty between subjects. There is some variation in the way the aggregates are determined in different systems. (For instance, must an English score be included in the aggregate?) In essence the between subject scaling uses the average scores of students in their other subjects to adjust the average of a subject to create the 'scaled' score. The scaled scores are added to give a total for the student which is converted into a percentile rank for a system using a method agreed to by all States (except Queensland).

Some differences

The emphasis given to internal and external assessment can differ significantly in Australian senior secondary systems. Two systems have no external examinations. These systems use general ability tests as external assessments.

Methods of quality assurance and means of moderating school assessments differ significantly in different Australian systems.

The scales used for reporting senior secondary assessments differ significantly across Australia.

All systems have breadth and depth requirements for their senior secondary certificates, and some systems add compulsory subjects requirements, literacy and numeracy requirements and other activity for completion of a certificate. There are not many of these other requirements for Australian senior secondary certificates.

Table 1 Senior Secondary Assessment and Tertiary Selection

	External examination used for certification	External examination used for selection	Institutional entrance examinations	Standardised test of aptitude/achievement	School assessment	Selection information other than ability assessments
Argentina			✔			
Austria	✔	✔				
Bulgaria			✔		✔	
Brazil	✔	✔	✔		✔	
Canada					✔	
Chile		✔	✔			
China		✔				
Denmark.	✔	✔			✔	
Egypt	✔	✔				
England	✔	✔				✔
Finland	✔		✔			
France	✔	✔	✔			
Germany	✔	✔			✔	
Hong Kong	✔	✔			✔	
India			✔			
International Baccalaureate	✔	✔			✔	
Ireland	✔					
Israel	✔	✔		✔		
Japan	✔		✔			
Norway					✔	
Paraguay			✔			
Russia	✔	✔	✔			
Scotland	✔	✔				✔
Spain	✔	✔			✔	
Sweden				✔	✔	

	External examination used for certification	External examination used for selection	Institutional entrance examinations	Standardised test of aptitude/achievement	School assessment	Selection information other than ability assessments
Tanzania	✔					
Thailand			✔	✔		
Turkey	✔				✔	
United States				✔	✔	✔
ACT				✔	✔	
QLD				✔	✔	
NSW	✔	✔			✔	
SA	✔	✔			✔	
TAS	✔	✔			✔	
VIC	✔	✔		✔	✔	
WA	✔	✔			✔	

Notes:

Some states privilege external assessment; others privilege internal assessment
Where states use both types of assessment, it is not clear from the table which of these has the most influence. Queensland and the ACT do not have external examinations. The jurisdictions with both internal and external assessment have introduced internal (school-based) assessment into an external examinations system over different periods of time and in different proportions towards a total score.
Some states have social moderation; others have statistical moderation
Some states use tests called aptitude tests; others call them tests of general achievement
All states use senior subject results as input into rankings (orders of merit) for university selection purposes

Table 2 Characteristics of Selected Senior Secondary Assessments

	Kinds of program academic or applied / vocational	**Curriculum choice** open, some required, most required	**Cross-curricular studies**	**Completion requirements** all, some, none	**Assessment mode** external, internal, both	**Assessment standards** norm or standards referenced	**Moderation** Statistical social, or supervised	**Reporting of performance** numbers, grades, descriptions	**Tertiary entrance** separate from certification or integrated
Denmark.	4 Separate streams of academic and applied	12 different programs	Individual project	13 core & 3 electives	External and internal	Norm referenced	No particular moderation	7 grades with grade 3 a pass	Integrated part of tertiary entrance
England	Academic or vocational	Recognising separate subjects Tiered subjects		None	External and internal	Standards referenced	Ofqual supervision	Grades	Integrated part of tertiary entrance
English Baccalaureate (possible)	Academic	6 core subjects at one level		Required subjects and levels	External	Standard referenced	Single external examinations	Grades	Integrated part of tertiary entrance
France	Choice between science, economics, social science and literature streams	Common requirements for streams	Cross-curricular and group projects	9 required subjects and independent and group projects	External and internal	Norm referenced	No particular moderation	Scores out of 20	Completion is tertiary entrance Entrance exams for some courses

	Kinds of program academic or applied / vocational	**Curriculum choice** open, some required, most required	**Cross-curricular studies**	**Completion requirements** all, some, none	**Assessment mode** external, internal, both	**Assessment standards** norm or standards referenced	**Moderation** Statistical social, or supervised	**Reporting of performance** numbers, grades, descriptions	**Tertiary entrance** separate from certification or integrated
Hong Kong	Academic and applied	4 core subjects and 3 electives	Liberal studies	4 core subjects of Chinese, English,, Mathematics and Liberal studies	External and internal	Standards referenced Some normative distinctions Described standards	Social moderation for internal and applied subjects Some standards monitoring	Five levels and normative grading Attained with distinction for Applied subjects Standards referenced reporting	Integrated part of tertiary entrance
International Baccalaureate	Academic	At least one from the 5 groups of subjects	Theory of Knowledge Essay, Extended Essay Creativity, Actions and Service activity	24 points from required groups with minimum thresholds Satisfactory performance on cross and co-curricular activities	External and internal	Standards referenced	IBO supervision	Score out of 45	Aimed at tertiary entrance
New Zealand	Range of equivalent academic and VET programs	Recognising separate subjects		Specified number of credits	External and internal	Standards referenced	NZQA supervision	4 levels from Not achieved to Achieved with excellence	Integrated part of tertiary entrance
Scotland	Diverse qualifications at different levels Optional Baccalaureate awards	No general requirements Requirements for Baccalaureate awards		Recognising separate achievements	External and internal	Standards referenced	SQA supervision	Graded A to D	Tertiary entrance at various levels A series of qualifications and awards
United States	General and diverse	Open but some tiered subjects		Determined by region	Internal and External ability testing	Locally determined grades	Common ability tests	Grade point average	Integrated part of tertiary entrance
Australia	Academic and academic / vocational	Required number of studies and some required studies		Required number of studies and some required studies	External and internal	Normative or standards-based or both	Statistical and / or social	Different ranges of number and grades Some described levels of performance	Integrated and often sole the basis of tertiary selection

Table 3 Characteristics of Australian Senior Secondary Certificates

	Kinds of program academic or applied / vocational	Curriculum choice open, some required, most required	Completion requirements breadth and depth	Assessment mode external, internal, both	Assessment standards norm or standards referenced	Moderation Statistical, supervised sampling or social	Reporting of performance numbers, broad grades, descriptions
ACT	Academic & vocational	No specific requirements	Breadth & depth requirements	Internal with some external	Both	Statistical and social	Grades
NSW	Academic & vocational	Maximum of 6 units of science	Breadth & depth requirements	External & internal Internal only	Both Described levels	Statistical	Grades and numbers
Qland	Academic & vocational	No specific requirements	Breadth & depth requirements	Internal with some external	Standards referenced	All	Grades
SA	Academic & vocational	Study of English and Maths required	Personal Learning Plan Literacy Numeracy Research Project	External & internal Internal only	Standards referenced	Supervised & social	Grades and numbers
TAS	Academic & vocational	No specific requirements	Breadth & depth requirements Standards of literacy, numeracy and ICT required	External & internal Internal only	Standards referenced Described levels	All	Grades and statements
VIC	Academic & vocational	English required	Breadth & depth requirements	External & internal Internal only	Normative	Statistical	Grades and numbers
WA	Academic & vocational	English required	An MST and ALSS study at Y12 C in English or statement of competence required	External & internal Internal only	Both	Social and supervised sampling	Grades and numbers

Assessment and Reporting Arrangements in Australian Jurisdictions

Tables 4 to 9 describe the characteristics of senior secondary assessment and reporting in the various jurisdictions other than Queensland as at 2013. The following issues were used to shape the information in the tables.

FORMALITIES
State Certificate of Education
Awarding body
Requirements
Permissible patterns of subject choice

METHODS OF REPORTING/CERTIFICATING
Documentation
Time-span for certification
Format and nomenclature

TERTIARY ENTRANCE
Selection mechanism
Eligibility
Combining results for tertiary entrance

INCORPORATION OF VET

CURRICULUM
Underpinning curriculum principles
Premises/value statements
Areas of study
Structure of curriculum document
Curriculum development

ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS
Internal
External
Standardised testing
Modes that contribute to high-stakes assessment

MODERATION
Type
Purpose
Process

Table 4 Australian Capital Territory	
FORMALITIES	
State Certificate of Education	ACT Year 12 Certificate
Awarding body	ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies
Requirements	Student must complete a coherent pattern of study: at least17 standard units forming at least 3 minors (A, M, T, H, V, C, E, R). Contribution per course to Certificate is a maximum of 8 standard units. Classification of courses (and units within courses): *A* – Deemed by the Board to be educationally sound and appropriate for students in Years 11 and 12. *M* – An A course deemed by the Board to provide appropriate educational experiences for students who satisfy specific disability criteria. *T* – Deemed by the Board to prepare students for higher education. H – Accredited and delivered by a higher education provider and recognized towards an undergraduate degree. Registered by the Board for recognition towards the Year 12 Certificate and ATAR. *V* – Accredited A to T course that also lead to the award of a Vocational Certificate or Statement of Attainment delivered by a college as the Registered Training Organisation. C – Accredited course delivered by a college as the Registered Training Organisation, which is competency assessed only. E – Vocational course delivered by an external Registered Training Organisation, which is registered by the Board for recognition towards the Year 12 Certificate. *R* – Appropriate for students in Years 11 and 12; design usually includes personal development, recreational or community services activities. One standard unit of study represents 55 hr minimum of structured learning activities, which includes timetabled classes, scheduled contact times, on-line learning, generally over 1 semester. Minor 2–3 standard units Major 3.5–5 standard units Major minor 5.5–6.5 standard units Double major 7–8 standard units
Permissible patterns of subject choice	No compulsory courses .There may be mandatory units within courses.
METHODS OF REPORTING/CERTIFICATING	
Documentation	Year 12 Certificate Tertiary Entrance Statement Vocational Certificate or Vocational Statement of Attainment Secondary College Record
Time-span for certification	Up to 5 years 1 break in study of up to 1 yr allowed; with permission of college principal.
Format and nomenclature	A, B, C, D and E grades awarded against course specific descriptors. Competencies achieved under the AQF listed.
TERTIARY ENTRANCE	

Selection mechanism	Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR), based on student performance in T courses, reported on the Tertiary Entrance Statement (TES), on a scale from 30.00 to 99.95.
Eligibility	Eligibility for TES • at least 20 standard units of which 18 are A T, H, C, E, M, with a minimum of 12.5 being T or H; arranged to form at least 3 majors and 3 minors or 4 majors and 1 minor; and of these at least 3 majors and 1 minor are T or H; • sit for ACT Scaling Test (AST) in final year of study.
Combining results of tertiary entrance	**Calculating the ATAR** A course score is calculated for each student completing a T or H course. BSSS scales the course scores where between school differences are provided by the AST results. This ensures that all T/H course scores can be meaningfully compared within and across colleges. Each student's Aggregate Score is the sum of the best three major scaled scores plus 0.6 of the next best scaled course score, whether a major or minor. Aggregate Scores for all eligible students are ranked (highest to lowest). Candidate rank assigned to students, starting at the top of the list. Ranks are converted to a cohort rank with a table supplied by the NSW Technical Committee on Scaling.

INCORPORATION OF VET	
Within both types of courses (T and A), there are provisions for students to study vocational courses and, to receive vocational certificates in addition to the Year 12 Certificate.	

CURRICULUM	

Underpinning curriculum principles	Curriculum including training packages should:
	• encourage students to complete secondary education in the fields of study of their choice
	• be inclusive and encourage respect for the diversity of the global community.
	• be capable of being flexibly delivered
	• be broadly based, challenging and responsive to the diverse needs and learning styles of students
	• enable students to prepare for their futures in further education and training, employment, and as active citizens by:
	   - developing knowledge and skills
	   - providing opportunities to explore attitudes and values, fostering physical, spiritual and creative development
	   - providing opportunities to participate and shape local and global communities
	   - providing opportunities to learn both independently and collaboratively and manage their own learning
	• provide students with explicit statements about the basis for assessment of students' achievements, which ensure that assessment is fair, valid and reliable
	• enable students' achievements to be reported accurately and comprehensively
	• motivate students to continue learning throughout their lives
	• be presented in clear, coherent, comprehensive documents
	• be subject to regular review

Premises/values statements	Underpinning Beliefs • All students are able to learn. • Learning is a partnership between students and teachers.

	• Teachers are responsible for advancing student learning. Learning Principles 1. Prior knowledge: Learning builds on existing knowledge, understandings and skills. 2. Connectivity: When learning is organised around major concepts, principles and significant real world issues, within and across disciplines, it helps students make connections and build knowledge structures. 3. Metacognition: Learning is facilitated when students actively monitor their own learning and consciously develop ways of organizing and applying knowledge within and across contexts. 4. Self-concept: Learners' sense of self and motivation to learn affect learning. 5. High expectations: Learning needs to take place in a context of high expectations. 6. Individual differences: Learners learn in different ways and at different rates. 7. Socio-cultural effects: Different cultural environments, including the use of language, shape learners' understandings and the way they learn. 8. Collaborative learning: Learning is a social and collaborative function as well as an individual one. 9. Explicit expectations and feedback: Learning is strengthened when learning outcomes and criteria for judging learning are made explicit and when students receive frequent feedback on their progress.
Areas of study	
Structure of curriculum document	**Course document** 1 Course name 2 Classification 3 Course framework 4 Course developers 5 Evaluation of previous course 6 Course length and composition 7 Subject rationale 8 Goals 8.1 Student group 8.2 College philosophy 9 Key content, concepts and processes 10 Teaching and learning strategies 11 Across curriculum perspectives 12 Student assessment 13 Unit grades 14 Bibliography 15 Resources 16 Proposed evaluation procedures 17 Unit content
Curriculum development	Course documents are based on the appropriate Course Frameworks. Courses are proposed and developed by colleges for accreditation by the Board. Course developers are responsible for detailing the content, across-curriculum perspectives, and teaching/learning strategies that implement the goals and promote student achievement within identified areas of knowledge and skill. Before a course can be taught it must be accredited by the Board.

	Accreditation Panels, consist of representatives from tertiary institutions, schools, industry and the community, which provide advice to the Board. Courses classified as T must be endorsed by the university representative and courses classified as V must be endorsed by the Industry representative. Curriculum review occurs as a 5-year rolling process.
Standards setting/-maintenance	*Principles for the Development of Unit Grade Descriptors* • each unit grade descriptor is to stand alone without requiring comparison with other unit grade descriptors • unit grade descriptors are to be stated in positive terms • unit grade descriptors are to be stated in terms of outcomes - what a student can do, the quality of the student's achievements and if appropriate, the conditions or situation under which these outcomes have been demonstrated • unit grade descriptors do not need to make mention of every assessment criterion • descriptors of student outcomes are to report what has been demonstrated. Descriptors are not stated as predictors • the language of the unit grade descriptors should be comprehensible to all readers and be unambiguous, with care taken to avoid unnecessary jargon • unit grade descriptors will be presented in a consistent style and format across Course Frameworks. Generic criteria, which form the basis of unit grade decisions across all Course Frameworks include: • student's knowledge and understanding of the concepts and principles of the unit; • student's cognitive and practical skills in a wide range of situations. As well as representing the Course Framework-specific unit grade descriptions, the letters A, B, C, D and E can be generally understood thus: A: Demonstrated a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the full range of concepts and principles of the unit. Shown evidence of a very high level of cognitive and practical skill in a wide range of assessment situations. B: Demonstrated a high level of knowledge and understanding of the concepts and principles of the unit. Shown evidence of a high level of cognitive and practical skill in a range of assessment situations. C: Demonstrated a sound level of knowledge and understanding of the basic concepts and principles of the unit. Shown evidence of a sound level of cognitive and practical skill in most assessment situations. D: Demonstrated a limited knowledge and understanding of the basic concepts and principles of the unit. Shown evidence of a limited level of cognitive and practical skill in assessment situations. E: Demonstrated a very limited knowledge and understanding of the basic concepts and principles of the unit. Shown evidence of a very limited level of cognitive and practical skill in assessment situations.
ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS	
Internal	Externally moderated, continuous school-based assessment Criterion-based; standards-referenced
External	There are no examinations set by a central authority for any subject.
Standardised testing	The ACT Scaling Test (AST) measures skills considered necessary

	for success at university. The AST provides group results for calculating the ATAR. The test consists of a two and half hour multiple choice test of 80 questions, a writing test of two and half hours and a short response test of one and half hours.
Modes that contribute to high-stakes assessment	A range of task types (as outlined in Course Framework and Course document). The Board has developed a set of Common Curriculum Elements to provide guidance to teachers in setting assessment items.
MODERATION	
Type	Consensus (peer review) and statistical
Purpose	To ensure consistency of teacher judgments and comparability of standards in reported grades. Statistical moderation ensures comparability of scores before aggregation to calculate the ATAR.
Process	Structured peer-review of standards and validation of unit grades assigned to student assessment portfolios Yrs 11 and 12 for all accredited courses; by matching student performance to criteria and standards outlined in the unit grade descriptors as stated in the Course Framework Advice given to colleges to assist teachers with, and/or reassure them on, their judgments. The broad processes of moderation include: • Establishment of system-wide assessment requirements, criteria and standards in Board Course Frameworks; • Accreditation of colleges' programs of study (courses) from which student results may be recorded on Board certificates; • Review of portfolios of student assessment responses (Yrs 11 and 12) to validate standards and maintain comparability of assessment outcomes; • Feedback to colleges about consensus-based grade decisions; • Development of college action plans to address problems arising from the review process. All senior secondary teachers participate in the review process twice a year.
MISCELLANEOUS	
Recent reviews	System is under continuous analysis and review.
Current revision/-transition arrangements	The Board is revising its Course Frameworks and courses in English, mathematics, history and science to integrate Australian Curriculum.

Table 5 NEW SOUTH WALES	
FORMALITIES	
State Certificate of Education	Higher School Certificate (HSC)
Awarding body	Board of Studies NSW
Requirements	Student has: • gained the School Certificate or other qualifications considered satisfactory by Board; • attended a government school, an accredited non-government school, an institute of TAFE NSW or a Board-recognised school outside NSW; • satisfactorily completed courses that comprise the required pattern of study; • sat for and made a serious attempt at the required HSC examination(s).
Permissible patterns of subject choice	Satisfactory completion of a Preliminary pattern of study comprising at least 12 units and an HSC pattern of study comprising at least 10 units. Both patterns must include: • at least 6 units of Board-developed courses; • at least 2 units of a Board-developed course in English; • at least 3 courses of unit value at least 2 (can be Board-developed or -endorsed courses); • at least 4 subjects. Maximum units from Science courses = 6 Preliminary and 6 HSC.
METHODS OF REPORTING/CERTIFICATING	
Documentation	*Testamur* For student who meets all requirements – Higher School Certificate (HSC), showing student name and school name *Higher School Certificate Record of Achievement* For student who satisfactorily completes at least 1 Preliminary or 1 HSC course – lists all courses satisfactorily completed and results therein, and courses satisfactorily completed in previous years; does not list courses studied but not satisfactorily completed. *Course Report* For each Board-developed HSC course completed and presented for examination: • moderated school assessment mark (except in VET courses) • external examination mark • HSC mark (average of assessment and examination marks) • performance band with description of what a typical student knows and can do at each level of achievement (bands 1–6 shown with 6 representing highest level of achievement) • graph showing student's HSC mark relative to HSC marks for course candidature. *AQF Certificate* or *Statement of Attainment* For student who meets requirements for at least 1 Board-developed VET course *Profile of Student Achievement* For student who meet requirements for at least 1 Board-developed Life Skills course
Time-span for certification	Accumulation of HSC courses and Preliminary courses allowed over 5-year rolling period that starts in first year of completion of an HSC course. Deletion of earliest year's presentation for students going beyond 5 yrs.

Format and nomenclature	HSC mark expressed numerically and graphically so that reader can relate student performance to corresponding descriptor and to her/his position in subject cohort.
TERTIARY ENTRANCE	
Selection mechanism	Index based on senior secondary school results, the ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank), calculated by the universities in NSW via the Universities Admissions Centre (UAC)
Eligibility	
Combining results for tertiary entrance	The ATAR is based on best 10 Board-developed units, including 2 of English. Board-developed courses must include at least 3 courses of at least 2 units and at least 4 subjects. Can include up to 2 units of Category B courses. Board-endorsed course results do not count towards the ATAR. **Calculating the ATAR** **Step 1: Scaling HSC marks** Quality of a subject's candidature defined in terms of their other-subject performances. Process modifies the mean, standard deviation and maximum mark in a course. Maximum mark in a course is related to the mean of the scaled marks in that course (to discourage students from taking easy courses in order to get high marks). **Step 2: Combining scaled HSC marks** Each student's scaled HSC marks are added together to produce that student's aggregate score (interim calculation not reported). **Step 3: Ranking aggregate scores** All students' aggregate scores placed in rank order. Individual student ranking expressed as position in the entire age cohort expressed as a percentile. This is the ATAR. **Step 4: Providing the ATAR** Students receive their ATAR from UAC.
INCORPORATION OF VET	

Board-developed industry curriculum framework courses: Examination optional, result appears on *Record of Achievement* as HSC mark within a performance band. Can be included in ATAR calculation if exam undertaken.

Board-endorsed VET courses (content is endorsed): Delivered by TAFE NSW. Count as units of study towards HSC but do not contribute to ATAR. Course name and unit value (no assessment mark) appear on *Record of Achievement*.

Locally designed VET courses: Subject to Board endorsement

Where eligible: *AQF Certificate* and statement of competencies achieved or a *Statement of Attainment*

CURRICULUM	
Underpinning curriculum principles	- Encourage students to complete secondary education. - Foster the intellectual, social and moral development of students, in particular: - Knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes in the fields of study - Capacity to manage their own learning - Desire to continue learning in formal or informal settings after school - Capacity to work with others - Respect for the cultural diversity of Australian society. - Provide a flexible structure within which students can prepare for further education and training, employment, and full and active participation as citizens. - Provide formal assessment and certification of students'

	achievements.
	• Provide a context within which schools also have the opportunity to foster students' physical and spiritual development.
Premises/value statements	Support the pursuit of excellence. Support quality teaching and learning. Encourage personal growth and self-confidence. Promote a fair and just society. Value diversity. Encourage English language literacy. Are environmentally sensitive.
Areas of study	Subject is the general name given to an area of study that may have several different courses (e.g. within subject English, courses include English Standard, English Advanced, English Life Skills). Course is a branch of study within a subject. There can be more than one level of study within a course. .

Structure of curriculum document	**Syllabus**
	1. The Higher School Certificate Program of Study
	2. Rationale for [Subject] in the Stage 6 Curriculum
	3. Continuum of Learning for [Subject] Stage 6 Students
	4. Aim
	5. Objectives
	6. Course Structure
	7. Objectives and Outcomes
	    7.1. Table of Objectives and Outcomes
	    7.2. Key Competencies
	    7.3. Course Overview
	8. Content
	    8.1. Preliminary Course
	    8.2. HSC Course
	9. Course Requirements
	10. Post-school Opportunities
	11. Assessment and Reporting
	    11.1. Requirements and Advice
	    11.2. Internal Assessment
	    11.3. External Examination
	    11.4. Board Requirements for the Internal Assessment Mark in Board Developed Courses
	    11.5. Assessment Components, Weightings and Tasks
	    11.6. HSC External Examination Specifications
	    11.7. Summary of Internal and External Assessment
	    11.8. Reporting Student Performance Against Standards
	12. Glossary/Appendix

Curriculum development	Occurs in following stages: • Syllabus review: evaluate, consult, research, recommend. • Writing-brief development: write brief, consult, identify issues, revise brief. • Syllabus development: draft; consult; address issues; report on meeting Board criteria; modify; to Curriculum Committee, then Board, then Minister; brief schools; distribute.
Standards setting/-maintenance	Outcome statements are written during development of new syllabuses. Along with course content, outcome statements guide teachers as to the knowledge, skills and understanding students are to develop through studying that course. Teams of experienced teachers considered student responses, statistical data and other materials from

	past HSC examinations, and prepared short statements (band descriptions) to summarize different levels of performance in the course.
	Mark of 90–100 corresponds to performance band 6; 80–89, band 5; 70–79, band 4; 60–69, band 3; 50–59, band 2; <50, band 1 (referred to as below minimum standard expected). There is no statement for band 1.

ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Internal	School-based assessments count for 50% of HSC. The exceptions are VET courses, Board Endorsed courses and Life Skills courses. Expressed as a mark on a scale with ordinal and interval properties Schools prepare and administer an assessment program in accordance with mandatory assessment components and weightings (as per corresponding syllabus). School determines timing and weighting of assessment tasks. Board recommends: • 3–5 tasks • weighting of each individual task at least10% and up to 40% of total assessment • higher weightings for tasks towards end of the assessment program • outcomes and components assessed by more than one task. Schools submit students' marks in HSC Board-endorsed courses to Board.
External	External examinations count for 50% of HSC. The exceptions are VET courses, Board Endorsed courses and Life Skills courses. Focuses on a sample of course outcomes in any one year (expectation that all outcomes able to be assessed in an examination are covered by the exam across a number of years).
Standardised testing	None
Modes that contribute to high-stakes assessment	HSC examination may involve more than one component, such as written examination, submitted work or practical examination. Some courses require practical examinations or submission of works (e.g. Dance, Industrial Technology). Internal assessment may include tests, written assignments, practical activities, fieldwork, and projects—a wider range of modes than external, aim being to assess a wide range of outcomes.

MODERATION

Type	Statistical
Purpose	To ensure that marks from internal assessment and external examination are aligned to the same standard
Process	For each course-group in a school, mean school assessment mark is set to be equal to mean examination mark, top school assessment mark to top examination mark and, where possible, bottom school assessment mark to bottom examination mark. Cut scores for each performance band are established through a standards setting process using subject experts (judges). Examination marks and school assessment marks expressed on a scale with anchors (70, 80, 90) to the boundaries between standards. Student's HSC mark in course is average of examination mark and moderated school assessment mark.

Table 6 SOUTH AUSTRALIA	
FORMALITIES	
State Certificate of Education	The South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE)
Awarding body	SACE Board of South Australia
Requirements	Student must**:** • undertake specified studies at Stages 1 and 2 • complete a minimum of 200 credits • achieve a C grade or higher in the Stage 1 compulsory requirements • achieve a C- grade or higher in the Stage 2 compulsory requirements The compulsory requirements are: • *Personal Learning Plan* (10 credits at Stage 1) • *Literacy* – from a range of English subjects or courses (at least 20 credits at Stage 1 or 2) • *Numeracy* – from a range of mathematics subjects or courses (at least 10 credits at Stage 1 or 2) • *Research Project* (10 credits at Stage 2) • *Other Stage 2 subjects* that total at least 60 credits.
Permissible patterns of subject choice	**Specified studies** Stage 1 (usually Year 11) Literacy • 20 credits from a range of English subjects or courses (minimum C grade) Numeracy • 10 credits from a range of mathematics subjects or courses (minimum of C grade) Personal Learning Plan • 10 credits from this subject (minimum C grade) Research Project • 10 credits from this subject (minimum C- grade) Other Stage 2 subjects • 60 credits at Stage 2 (minimum C- grade) **Free-choice credits:** 90 credits from Stage 1 or Stage 2.
METHODS OF REPORTING/CERTIFICATING	
Documentation	The South Australian Certificate of Education is awarded to students who complete all the requirements of the certificate The SACE Record of Achievement is a transcript of a student's Stage 1 and Stage 2 results. It includes: • Stage 1 subjects, reported as a grade, A to E. • Stage 2 subjects, reported as a grade, A+ to E- • Recognition of Vocational Education and Training (listed under relevant qualification); Community-based learning; University Studies; Interstate and International secondary school qualifications, reported as number of SACE credits and 'granted'
Time-span for certification	No time limits apply
TERTIARY ENTRANCE	
Selection mechanism	Index based on senior secondary school results, the Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR), calculated by the SACE Board of

	SA on behalf of the universities and TAFE SA.
Eligibility	Eligibility for the university aggregate (precursor to the ATAR): • qualified for the SACE • complete at least 80 credits of study in Tertiary Admissions Subjects (TAS) and Recognised Studies at Stage 2 in a maximum of three attempts which need not be in consecutive years • of the 80 credits of study a minimum of 60 credits of study must be from 20 credit TAS.

Combining results for tertiary entrance	The ATAR is derived from the university aggregate. The university aggregate is calculated from scaled scores. The best scaled scores (on a scale of 20.00) from three 20 credit TAS plus the best outcome from the 'flexible option', which can be either:
	• the score of a fourth 20 credit TAS or Recognised Studies;
	or any two of the following:
	• half the score of a fourth 20 credit TAS or Recognised Studies;
	• the score of a 10 credit TAS or Recognised Studies;
	• the score of another 10 credit TAS or Recognised Studies.
	Calculating the ATAR
	• Add scaled scores for the student's best three 20-credit subjects to the score for the 'flexible option'.
	• Obtain total out of 80. This is the university aggregate score.
	• Obtain percentile distribution and corresponding percentile rank (0–100).
	• Student's percentile rank is her/his ATAR.
	TAFE SA entrance
	Eligibility for TAFE SA Selection Scores, a score out of 60.00, is calculated from the scaled scores of the best 40 Stage 2 credits of TAS plus the best outcome from either:
	• The score of a third 20 credit TAS or Recognised Studies;
	or any two of the following:
	  o half the score of another 20 credit TAS or Recognised Studies;
	  o The score of a 10 credit TAS or Recognised Studies;
	  o The score of another 10 credit TAS or Recognised Studies.
	The TAFE SA Selection Score is reported to students in the score range of 0-60.00.

INCORPORATION OF VET

The SACE recognises successfully completed VET units of competency and qualifications towards the completion of the required 200 credits. Up to 150 credits can come from VET. All VET qualifications (from Certificate I to Diploma) contribute towards the SACE completion requirements. VET qualifications are assigned either Stage 1 or Stage 2 recognition status. In general, Certificate I and II are assigned Stage 1 status and CIII and above are assigned Stage 2 status.

The SACE does not package units of competency or qualifications into SACE subjects. Rather, the SACE Board recognises directly the VET that is completed by students through delivery by Registered Training Organisations.

A completed CIII can contribute to a student's calculation of the university aggregate and their ATAR. Students who successfully complete a CIII are given the average scaled score for their best 60 Stage 2 credits (i.e. average scaled score of their best three Stage 2 subjects) as part of the Recognised Studies policy.

CURRICULUM

Underpinning curriculum principles	The SACE is designed to enable students to: • Develop the capabilities to live, learn, work and participate successfully in a changing world • Plan and engage in a range of challenging, achievable, and manageable learning experiences, taking into account their goals and abilities; • Build their knowledge, skills, and understanding in a variety of contexts, for example, schools, workplaces, and training and community organisations • Gain credit for their learning achievements against performance standards.
Premises/value statements	The SACE takes into account: • Diversity of students • Different places of learning • Personalisation of learning • Applying rigorous and consistent standards.
Areas of study	Arts Business, Enterprise and Technology Cross-disciplinary English Health and Physical Education Humanities and Social Sciences Languages Mathematics Sciences Modified Subjects (for students with Intellectual Disabilities).
Structure of curriculum document	Introduction • Purposes of the SACE • Subject Description • Capabilities • Cross-Curriculum Priorities STAGE 1 [Subject Name] Learning Scope and Requirements • Learning Requirements • Content Assessment Scope and Requirements • Evidence of Learning • Assessment Design Criteria • School Assessment • Performance Standards Assessment Integrity Support Materials • Subject-specific Advice • Advice on Ethical Study and Research STAGE 2 [Subject Name] Learning and Scope and Requirements • Learning Requirements • Content Assessment Scope and Requirements Evidence of Learning • Assessment Design Criteria • School Assessment • External Assessment

	• Performance Standards Assessment Integrity Support Materials • Subject-specific Advice • Advice on Ethical Study and Research
Curriculum development	Underpinned by community consultation, comprising: • research • drafting • accreditation • implementation • monitoring • auditing Similar quality assurance processes applied to all subject outlines. Once accredited, available to all organisations licensed to deliver the SACE. Accreditation of curriculum and assessment is a legislative function of the Board. It delegates responsibility for the accreditation of subject outlines, and subsequent changes to curriculum statements, to the Accreditation, Recognition, and Certification Committee (ARCC), a Board sub-committee. The Board approves all policies related to the accreditation of subject outlines. The Board systematically reviews its subject offerings. It canvasses, via written submission and/or questionnaire, the views on possible amalgamations, deletions, and/or additions to the overall subject offerings from all the nominating agencies and schools. It reviews the subject offerings taking into account the curriculum development undertaken by ACARA. The criteria upon which the reviews are conducted are identical to those used by the Board to consider requests from schools, institutions, and other authorities, viz: • increase in participation in the SACE • demand and support for the subject • overlap with existing subjects • resource impact on schools and SACE Board
Standards setting/- maintenance	SACE Board has a 'SACE Assuring Assessment Integrity Policy'. This policy states the standards setting process, and the quality assurance processes adopted by the Board. The quality assurance process have for main elements: • planning • clarifying (includes standards workshops) • confirming (includes moderation and marking processes) • improving
ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS	
School	School grades count for 100% at Stage 1 and 70% at Stage 2.
External	No external examinations at Stage 1 of the SACE. At Stage 2, all subjects have a 30% external assessment component. This component is usually takes the form of an examination, performance, product, or investigative study.
Standardised testing	None
Modes that contribute to high-stakes assessment	A variety of writing-based, oral, practical and performance assessments. For majority of SACE subjects the required number of assessment components is prescribed. Assessment tasks within assessment

	components are negotiable; range of components not negotiable, except through special provisions in assessment in limited circumstances.
MODERATION	
Type	Non-statistical
Purpose	To validate marking standards
Process	1. Teachers submit grades for all students for each assessment type of the school assessment. 2. SACE Board chooses a sample from the complete list; usually examples of A+, A-, B-, C-, D+, E- 3. School prepares the sample material for the identified students and sends them to the SACE Board. 4. SACE Board conducts moderation of the grades by panels of two moderators. 5. Any changes to grades are authorised by a supervisor. For full details see *SACE Assessment and Quality Assurance of Board-Accredited Subjects Policy*, February 2013.
MISCELLANEOUS	
Recent reviews	*South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE)* was conducted in 2006. *SACE First Year Evaluation* was conducted in 2012.

Table 7 TASMANIA	
FORMALITIES	
State Certificate of Education	There are three senior secondary certificates in Tasmania: the Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE); the Qualifications Certificate (QC); and the Tasmanian Certificate of Educational Achievement (TCEA). Depending on achievement and personal circumstances, a student might get one, two or all three certificates.
Awarding body	Tasmanian Qualifications Authority (TQA)
Requirements	To obtain the TCE qualification a person must meet or exceed standards for: • everyday adult reading, writing, communicating (literacy) • everyday adult mathematics (numeracy) • everyday adult use of information and communications technology (ICT) • participation and achievement in senior secondary studies (education and training) • planning for future career and education pathways. People can meet these requirements in different ways (including through senior secondary and Vocational Education and Training courses), in different settings (including secondary schools or colleges, the Tasmanian Polytechnic and the Academy, and other education and training providers and the workplace) and over different periods of time. For example, people may reach the TCE skills standards by: • senior secondary courses (year 11 and 12) in areas such as English, Mathematics and Information Technology • VET courses like Certificate II in Information Technology • stand-alone tests provided by the TQA. To meet the participation and achievement standards people need to have 120 credit points in education and training (TQA level 1, 2, 3 or 4), with at least 80 of these credit points in courses rated at TQA level 2 or higher. The TCE requires a person 'to have developed and reviewed plans for education and training'. Most students meet this standard by developing a plan during Year 10 and reviewing their progress at some time before they finish their senior secondary education and training. To obtain the QC at the end of senior secondary studies a person must successfully complete at least one of the following: • TQA accredited course • VET certificate or unit of competency • TQA recognised course. The QC is issued to all students, including those who do not meet the requirements for the TCE, showing all their senior secondary education and training qualifications. The QC includes VET qualifications and units of competence, senior secondary qualifications and other qualifications recognised by the TQA. To obtain the TCEA a person must show that their personal circumstances mean that the TCE or QC will not give an adequately

	just and fair description of their educational participation and achievement. The TCEA contains a descriptive, personalised account of educational participation and achievement that is validated by the TQA. The TCEA provides a quality assured, centrally issued, descriptive account of learning. A person who gets the TCEA may also get the Qualifications Certificate and the TCE.
Permissible patterns of subject choice	No compulsory subjects No prescribed patterns of subject choice
METHODS OF REPORTING/CERTIFICATING	
Documentation	Australian Tertiary Admissions Statement is sent to Yr 12 students eligible for tertiary entrance showing all TCE level 3/High Achiever Program (HAP) subjects satisfactorily undertaken, the score achieved for each subject and their overall tertiary entrance result.
Time-span for certification	No time limits apply.

Format and nomenclature	The TCE certificate shows senior secondary results recording student's achievements in:
	
	• subjects assessed under TCE senior secondary syllabuses levels 2–5
	• nationally recognised VET certificates and competencies
	• TQA recognised courses
	• University of Tasmania HAP studies.
	
	The certificate may also record student's achievements in subjects assessed under:
	• TCE secondary syllabuses (before 2005)
	• TCE 1 syllabuses (syllabuses not assigned to a level)
	• school developed courses.
	
	In a TCE syllabus/TQA accredited course a successful student receives one of the following awards:
	      EA - Exceptional Achievement
	      HA - High Achievement
	      CA - Commendable Achievement
	      SA - Satisfactory Achievement
	      PA - Preliminary Achievement.
	
	Senior secondary results can also include:
	• VET competencies and certificates using the nationally recognised terminology
	• TQA recognised courses using nomenclature defined by an awarding body
	Competency-based assessments may use a 'mastery plus' award structure. In courses using this approach, different levels of achievement are reflected in the awards available. For example 'Pass' and 'Higher Pass'.

TERTIARY ENTRANCE	
Selection mechanism	Year 12 students usually gain entry to courses at the University of Tasmania using their Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR), worked out from achievement in TCE level 3 subjects using rules

	approved by the university. There are other pathways for non-Yr 12 students.
Eligibility	A student in Tasmania who has completed at least four level 3 subjects, with at least three from Yr 12 is eligible for an ATAR. The calculation is based on the best five (equivalent – HAP subjects are half the size of TCE level 3 subjects) results. Subjects cannot be counted twice.
Combining results for tertiary entrance	TQA in collaboration with the University of Tasmanian calculates the ATAR. Rasch Analysis (a form of IRT) is used to estimate the relative 'difficulty' of each award in each level 3 subject. The 'test items' in this case are the subject assessments and the underlying characteristic that is being estimated is 'general academic ability' of students. The relative estimated difficulties are adjusted so that the weighted average values for the CA and the EA award remain the same from year to year. Estimates for HAP results are linked to the estimates for TCE level 3 subjects. A (scaled) score is then calculated for each subject result. These range from at least 1 to 21+ approx. The ATAR is calculated by adding the three best (scaled) subject scores from level 3 subjects satisfactorily completed in Yr 12 (or a subsequent year), together with the next best two (equivalent) other subject scores taken from either the same year, or any other single year after Yr 10. The Tasmanian ATAR is determined from a ranking based on the tertiary entrance scores (using a method agreed to by all States) as a percentile ranking of students from the total age cohort.

INCORPORATION OF VET

Tasmanian senior secondary students can complete nationally recognised VET competencies and certificates, including on-the-job training as required by Training Packages, with Registered Training Organizations (RTO) registered with TQA. Schools may be RTOs. Senior secondary students' results (competencies and certificates) in VET also appear on their TCEs.

VET certificates and units of competency, when successfully completed, generate credit points toward the TCE and may be used to assign a notional score to determine an equivalent ATAR.

CURRICULUM	
Underpinning curriculum principles	The Tasmanian Qualifications Authority classifies courses/ qualifications according to three parameters: complexity (how difficult/demanding) size value (how long/big) robustness (the degree of reliability and validity of results issued) Education providers can deliver courses whether they are accredited or not. However, only accredited courses are listed on the Qualifications Certificate and may contribute to a student meeting the requirements of the Tasmanian Certificate of Education. Accreditation provides a level of external scrutiny and quality assurance for a course and enhances the value of the results students

receive. Once a senior secondary course is accredited by the TQA, it is listed on the TQA website and is available to be delivered by any registered provider.

Proponents of senior secondary courses submit them to the TQA for accreditation on the understanding that:
• the TQA may make amendments to course documents to ensure they meet standard formatting requirements
• the TQA will identify quality assurance regimes and undertake activities to quality assure the implementation of accredited courses
• accredited course documents are published on the TQA website and are freely available for use by providers.

The following principles offer a framework for course development.
1. Courses must align with the goals of education specified in the Melbourne Declaration
2. There is information about levels of student demand in enrolments, teacher perceptions and student perspectives.
3. Tasmania has strategic needs for student learning related to sustainable economic and social prosperity (for example, green skills).
4. There is a significant role for TQA accredited courses in providing preparation for further studies.
5. There is a significant role for TQA accredited courses in developing 'life-skills'.
6. TQA accredited courses must be coherent and have clear, identified and distinctive learning outcomes that can be assessed and reported in terms meaningful to the users of TQA certificates.
7. General capabilities identified in the Melbourne Declaration (literacy, numeracy, ICT, thinking skills, creativity, self-management, teamwork, intercultural understanding, ethical behaviour and social competence) should be embedded in a course to the extent that these capabilities align with the nature of the knowledge and skills that define the distinctive nature of the course and with valid and reliable assessment in the course.
8. Priorities for course development should:
(i) avoid unnecessary and inefficient duplication between senior secondary and VET/higher education
(ii) support credit transfer and articulation across post-compulsory education
(iii) encourage links between senior secondary providers and UTAS.
9. TQA accredited courses must provide learning that is not superficial, not so narrowly focused that it leads at best to an immediate specialised destination.
10. The suite of TQA accredited courses should be sufficiently small to provide not only for efficiency but also for clarity of purpose and outcomes - the set of courses should be small enough that different courses are clearly different and distinct.
11. The need for a particular TQA accredited course is not demonstrated by considerations of provider timetables, a need to keep students 'occupied', inadequacy of or superfluity of providers' physical or human resources, the fact that a course already exists or ensuring that no achievement is too small to be formally certified.
12. The size of a TQA course is driven by its learning outcomes and not by timetabling considerations.
13. The level of a TQA course is driven by the learning

	outcomes/standards.
Curriculum development	Individuals or bodies may develop senior secondary courses and apply to the TQA for their accreditation. Under the Tasmanian Qualifications Authority Act (2003), the Authority is responsible for accrediting senior secondary courses. The TQA may accredit courses at its own instigation. The accreditation of a course will depend on its strategic value and the course will involve the TQA in one or more of the following: • determining procedures and arrangements for assessment • ensuring the standards of provision are met • issuing qualifications To accredit a course, the TQA must be satisfied that the: • following are adequately provided for and of a sufficient standard: • the aims and learning outcomes of the course • the scope of the studies involved • the assessment processes • course and methods of delivery are likely to achieve the purposes, aims and learning outcomes of the course • the contents, standards and delivery methods are consistent with any relevant national standards In considering a proposed course the TQA will apply the Senior Secondary Course Accreditation Criteria. The TQA recognises a wide range of formal learning undertaken by senior secondary Tasmanian students. Providers of formal learning qualifications not recognised by the TQA may apply for such recognition. 'Recognition' means that the qualifications issued by recognised formal learning providers are listed on a student's Qualification Certificate and may contribute to meeting TCE requirements. The TQA has a process for recognising – assessing and certifying – a person's informal (and non-formal) learning that takes place outside formal programs in schools, colleges, registered training organisations and universities.

Standards setting/- maintenance	All TCE senior secondary syllabuses use criterion-based assessment.
	For each criterion (generic and subject specific) there are specific standards ranging over the levels of difficulty (i.e. levels 2–5) for which the syllabus has been provided. At each level there are three sub-sets of descriptors, distinguished by the ratings labelled *C*, *B* or *A*. The descriptors define the minimum requirement for achievement of the rating. A student's final award is determined from the profile of ratings.
	The standards for TQA accredited course frameworks are defined in terms of a template that relates *required features of achievement* and the *awards* – EA, HA, CA, SA, PA. Each feature is a continuum. *Benchmarks* placed on each feature help to define the feature and to show the relationship of achievement on this feature and the final award. The final decision about an award is an on-balance decision, taking into account rules listed on the template. The template provides both a description of the standards and a tool for making and recording the assessment decisions.
	The TQA is responsible for the quality assurance of qualifications issued as a result of successful completion of the requirements of courses it accredits. To ensure confidence in the integrity and meaning of its qualifications the TQA uses a number of methods to provide an adequate degree of quality. One of the methods employed is to audit the course provision by individual providers. In the audit process providers submit bodies of students' work sufficient to allow an assessment against a nominated range of criteria and the overall award to an annual review meeting organised by the TQA. The work, while not necessarily fully resolved, will be assessed by the provider against the range of nominated assessment criteria and the overall award. The TQA gives each provider guidance regarding the selection of students and the nominated criteria.
ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS	
Internal	The TQA approves students' internal assessments if schools ensure that: • the course of study complies with the syllabus statement, that all criteria are addressed, that specified content is covered, and that the broad objectives of the syllabus are reflected in the teaching and assessment • each student's performance is assessed on the assessment criteria stated in the syllabus against the standards provided by the TQA for that syllabus • each student's achievement on each criterion is given a rating of A, B, C at the end of the course of study • the school complies with all moderation requirements for the syllabus
External	All TCE level 3 syllabuses include an external assessment component, where students are assessed on half of the criteria stated in the syllabus. Students' performances on these externally assessed criteria are summarised as a rating of *A*, *B* and *C*. Final awards are determined from the combined set of internal rating and external rating, using the

	award rules that are stated in the syllabus.
	TQA accredited course frameworks at levels 3 and 5 include external quality assurance of the assessment and standards.
Standardised testing	The TCEA provides 'safety net' tests for students who would not otherwise be give an adequately just and fair description of their educational participation and achievement. The TCEA contains a descriptive, personalised account of educational participation and achievement that is validated by the TQA.
Modes that contribute to high-stakes assessment	TQA level 3 subjects, UTAS HAP subjects, notional VET scores
MODERATION	
Type	Quality assurance arrangements exist for all the achievement results that can be used to demonstrate meeting the requirement of the TCE: • TQA accredited courses • VET nationally recognised qualifications issued by Registered Training Organisations • TQA recognised formal learning qualifications issued by other institutions/organisations • TQA issued qualifications such as the Individual Learning Qualification • Safety-net testing of 'everyday adult' skill sets There are two components of TCE syllabus moderation. Major emphasis is placed on consensus moderation: the process of attaining comparability in the assessment of student achievement. The second moderation component is statistical monitoring, where the TQA makes determinations about consistency in awards and takes actions to ensure comparability in assessments where appropriate. TQA accredited course frameworks specify an external TQA panel review of learning designs and assessment standards as shown in the evidence of student work.
Purpose	Statewide comparability of standards and consistency with syllabus/course standards minimum requirements
Process	Consensus Particular criteria (usually one or two), and tasks appropriate for assessing these criteria, are selected for moderation each year. One meeting of at least one teacher from each school offering the syllabus is held in March to decide tasks. A second meeting in September is held to examine examples of assessments to the particular descriptors of the selected criteria. Internal school moderation meetings are held to ensure that all teachers of the syllabus are fully informed of the requirements of and results from the moderation meetings. The TQA may reject a school's final ratings or adjust them if there is evidence to justify such action, for example, if: • assessment procedures have not been followed; or • moderation consensus recommendations have been rejected

	Analysis TCE level 3 syllabuses have an external assessment component. Half of the assessment criteria as assessed both by internal process and by one or more external instruments. The two assessments against the same criteria are analysed. Class and school variations greater than those commonly observed are identified and discussed with school leaders. Strategies for rectification are identified by schools. Monitoring the following year is undertaken to determine the effectiveness of the strategy. The TQA's verification processes include: going to destinations (employment, further education, training, higher education) for: • feedback about the demonstrated skills of holders of the TCE; and • gathering evidence of student achievement.

Table 8 VICTORIA	
FORMALITIES	
State Certificate of Education	Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL), an alternative to the VCE
Awarding body	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)

Requirements	VCE
	• Satisfactorily complete at least 16 units
	• Can include VET
	• Regardless of total number of units, must satisfactorily complete at least 3 from:
	   – Foundation English Units 1, 2
	   – English Units 1–4 or /EAL 3-4
	   – English Language Units 1- 4
	   – Literature Units 1- 4
	• Cannot count > 2 units from studies at units 1 and 2
	• Three sequences of Units 3 and 4 studies in addition to the sequence chosen for compulsory English. These sequences can be from VCE studies and/or VCE VET programs.

Permissible patterns of subject choice	As above. Also, VTAC places restrictions on certain combinations of VCE study areas and VET studies.
METHODS OF REPORTING/CERTIFICATING	
Documentation	VCE Certificate Statement of Results
Time-span for certification	Although designed for Yrs 11 and 12, VCE studies can start in Yr 10 (this is the case with approx. 54% of Victorian Yr 10 students).
TERTIARY ENTRANCE	
Selection mechanism	ATAR (a number between 0 and 99.95 in intervals of 0.05).
Eligibility	Student obtains S for both Units 3 and 4 in a study and a study score.
Combining results for tertiary entrance	Calculating the ATAR Assign study scores: Student gets a Study Score on a scale 0–50 (a measure of performance relative to others who took the study). Distribution of study scores (50 max, 0 min) cluster around 30 (for a given study approx. 70% of students get a study scores 23–37). Scale study scores to obtain ATAR subject scores for each study: For each VCE study, study scores are scaled according to the strength of the competition in that study (strength of competition in a particular study is gauged by comparing students' performance in all their other VCE studies with their performance in the particular study). This scaled study score is the ATAR subject score. Aggregate subject scores to obtain the ATAR aggregate: Use maximum of 6 results (including VCE VET sequences) in the aggregate. Where > 6 results exist, use the 6 legitimate results yielding the highest aggregate. Add ATAR subject scores according to the following sequence: • best subject score for an English study • next best 3 ATAR subject scores (of an allowable combination) • 10% of any fifth and sixth ATAR subject score as/if available Up to 3 scored VCE VET sequences may be included in the primary four; a fourth or fifth may count as an increment. VET sequences may count as the fifth and/or sixth increment by adding 10% of the average

	of the primary four. The increment for the sixth study may be for an approved university study as part of the VCE extension study program. ATAR aggregate is between 0 and 210+.
	Rank all eligible students according to their ATAR aggregates.
	Assign a percentile rank that (as far as possible) distributes the students evenly (although ties might result in an increase in the number of students assigned a certain percentile rank).
	Convert the percentage rank to an ATAR, using a method agreed to by all States (except Qld).
	ATAR, a number between 0 and 99.95 in intervals of 0.05, is thus an estimate of a student's relative position in her/his age-group, having taken account of students who have moved or left school before Year 12.
INCORPORATION OF VET	
Of the > 90 VCE studies, 30 are VCE VET programs that also provide a nationally recognised industry qualification, 14 of which count directly towards the ATAR for tertiary entrance via a study score. Most other VET programs also count through block credit recognition.	
CURRICULUM	
Areas of study	
Structure of curriculum document	Study Design Variations on: • Introduction • Rationale • Aims • Structure • Entry • Duration • Prescribed texts • Changes to the study design • Monitoring for quality • Safety • Use of information technology • Community standards • Assessment and reporting • Satisfactory completion • Authentication • Levels of achievement • Units • Outcome statements • Key knowledge and key skills under each outcome statements • Prescribed assessments for Units 3-4. • Weightings of assessment tasks for units 3-4
ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS	
Internal	There are three forms of graded school assessment – School-assessed Coursework, School-assessed Tasks and Externally-assessed Tasks. The form/s of school assessment and their weighting are specified for each study and are to be found in the Study Design. For each coursework component, the Study Design specifies a range of assessment tasks for assessing the achievement of the unit outcomes. School-assessed Tasks occur in studies where products and models are assessed (Art, Media etc).
External	External examinations (written, oral, performance and electronic) are set and marked by VCAA.
Standardised	General Achievement Test (GAT): a test of general knowledge and

testing	skills in:
	• written communication
	• mathematics, science and technology
	• humanities, the arts and social sciences.
	Used for monitoring assessments and statistical moderation
MODERATION	
Type	Statistical
Purpose	To ensure that schools' coursework assessments are comparable across the State and fair to all students
Process	The level and spread of each school's assessments of its students in each study is compared with the level and spread of the same students' scores in the external examinations. School scores are adjusted if necessary.
	In some studies, students' GAT scores (as well as their examination scores) are used for comparison purposes; specifically where GAT is a better match with schools' coursework assessments throughout the State. External examination scores, however, are the major influence in statistical moderation.
	All VCE studies are statistically moderated.

Table 9 Western Australia	
Formalities	
State Certificate of Education	WA Certificate of Education (WACE)
Awarding body	School Curriculum and Standards Authority
Requirements	Achievement of a WACE signifies that a student has successfully met the breadth and depth, achievement standard and English language competence requirements in their senior secondary schooling.
	For 2013–2015 these requirements will be:
	- Complete a minimum of 20 course units or the equivalent. The 20 course units must include at least four course units from English, Literature and/or English as an Additional Language/Dialect, studied during Year 11 and Year 12 (at least two of these units must be completed in Year 12) - one pair of course units from each of List A (arts/languages/social sciences) and List B (mathematics/science/technology) completed in Year 12. - Achieve a C grade or better in any Stage 1 or higher course unit from English, Literature and/or English as an Additional Language or Dialect (except 1A and 1B for English as an Additional Language or Dialect). - For students who have not achieved a C grade in one of their English, Literature and/or English as an Additional Language or Dialect course units, schools will need to compare a selection of the student's work with the work samples provided by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority to verify the student has demonstrated the required standard - Up to 10 unit equivalents may comprise endorsed programs and/or VET credit transfer. Unit equivalence for endorsed programs is determined by an endorsed programs panel in relation to one unit of a WACE course. There are quite explicit rules that support and constrain the processes of credit (or block) transfer for VET and unit equivalence for endorsed programs.
	http://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/internet/Senior_Secondary/The_WACE/WACE_Requirements
Permissible patterns of subject choice	**Breadth and depth**
	Students must complete a minimum of 20 course units or the equivalent. These must include at least:
	- four different course units from English, Literature and/or English as an Additional Language or Dialect, studied during Year 11 and Year 12 (at least two of these units must be completed in Year 12) - one pair of course units from each of List A (arts/languages/social sciences) and List B (mathematics/science/technology) completed in Year 12.
Methods of reporting/certificating	
Documentation	*WACE* (if attained)
	Statement of results
	A statement of results is issued to Year 12 students who complete at least one course unit, endorsed program or VET unit of competency.
	The statement of results formally records, as relevant:

	- the meeting of WACE requirements - English language competence - exhibitions and awards - WACE course scores - grades in course units - VET qualifications and VET units of competency successfully completed - endorsed programs successfully completed - number of community service hours completed - results in D and E code subjects and WACE courses from previous years. **WACE course report** A WACE course report is issued to students who sit a WACE examination in that course. There is a separate WACE course report for each stage of a course. The WACE course report records: - school grades - school marks - moderated school marks - raw examination marks - standardised examination marks. The WACE course report shows how the student performed relative to: - the course standards - all other students who completed and sat the examination in that pair of units
Time-span for certification	No time limit
Tertiary Entrance	
Selection mechanism	Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) based on achievement standards in school assessments and WACE examinations
Eligibility	Anyone who satisfies the requirements for a Tertiary Entrance Aggregate (TEA). The TEA will be calculated by adding a student's best four scaled scores plus 10% of that student's best Language Other Than English (LOTE) scaled score, based on the following rules: The best four scaled scores may be accumulated scaled scores which contribute to the ATAR over five consecutive years, with no subject or course counting more than once. There are unacceptable course combinations whereby scores in both courses/subjects cannot both be used. A LOTE bonus of 10% of a LOTE scaled score is added to the aggregate of the best four scaled scores, subject to no LOTE scaled score earlier than 2011 being used. From 2016 Year 12, LOTE scaled scores must be from current or the previous four years. If more than one LOTE has been sat, only one (the best) LOTE scaled score can be used as the LOTE bonus. Students receive the LOTE bonus irrespective of whether their LOTE course was counted as one of the best four. The maximum TEA is 410. The ATAR directly reports a student's position relative to other students. The ATAR allows for accurate comparisons from year to year. The ATAR calculation takes into account the number of students who sit the WACE examinations in any year and also the number of people of Year 12 school leaving age in the total population. The ATAR allows the results of any WA student applying for university admission interstate to be directly compared

	with results in other states. All states (except Queensland) report student rankings as an ATAR.
Combining results for tertiary entrance	**Calculating the scaled score** Scaling adjusts for differences in difficulty between courses and aims to ensure that, in terms of access to university, students are not disadvantaged if they choose to study difficult course/stages. TISC and the Authority apply the average marks scaling (AMS) method to the combined course marks of all students who have completed at least four course/stages. This method uses the averages in other courses, to adjust the average of the course/stage to create a 'scaled' score. A student's scaled score for a course/stage is likely to be different from the student's school mark, examination mark, combined mark and WACE course score. Because scaled scores from all courses are on a common scale, they are used to calculate the Tertiary Entrance Aggregate (TEA) and the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) for university admission purposes.
Incorporation of VET	
	In WA, the Training Accreditation Council (TAC) is responsible for quality assurance and recognition processes for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and for the accreditation of courses. For RTOs in partnership with WA schools, but with scope not limited to WA, the quality assurance is regulated under the National VET regulator through the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). All school RTOs are subject to the same audit processes by TAC as other training providers involved in VET in schools delivery and assessment. Full and partial AQF qualifications undertaken as a part of a WACE program may be allocated credit towards the WACE through: • VET industry specific courses (full qualifications only) • VET integrated within courses • VET credit transfer. There are VET industry specific courses including a full nationally recognised AQF qualification that contributes towards the WACE as a WACE course. VET courses can be integrated within a course involves students undertaking one or more VET units of competency concurrently with a WACE course unit.
Curriculum	
Underpinning curriculum principles	The Principles of teaching, learning and assessment in the WA Curriculum and Assessment outline focus on the provision of a school and class environment that is intellectually, socially and physically supportive of learning. The principles assist whole-school planning and individual classroom practice. It is essential, therefore, to ensure that there is a shared understanding of them within particular school communities and a collaborative effort to implement these principles in ways appropriate to individual schools. The principles are: 1. **Opportunity to learn** Learning experiences should enable students to observe and practise the actual processes, products, skills and values that are expected of them. 2. **Connection and challenge** Students should be provided with opportunities to connect their existing knowledge, skills and values while extending and challenging their current ways of thinking with their new experiences. 3. **Action and reflection** Learning experiences should encourage both action and reflection on the part of the student. 4. **Motivation and purpose** Learning experiences should be motivating and their purpose clear to the student.

	5. **Inclusivity and difference** Learning experiences should respect and accommodate differences between learners. 6. **Independence and collaboration** Learning experiences should encourage students to learn both independently and from and with others. 7. **Supportive environment** The school and classroom setting should be safe and conducive to effective learning.
Areas of study	
Structure of curriculum document	The Authority provides the syllabus for each course. The syllabus includes: • a rationale • a description of each unit • the content (i.e. knowledge, skills and understanding) for each unit • an assessment table which specifies the assessment types and weightings for each stage • the WACE examination details (the examination design briefs) for Stage 2 and Stage 3 • the grade descriptions for each stage (or, in the case of Mathematics and Mathematics: Specialist, for each pair of units).
Curriculum development	Formal process for development and accreditation of courses and their units using SCSA course advisory committee (CAC) processes providing evidence and advice, with accreditation subject to review every 5 years. • Establishing course reference groups to develop the initial conceptual framework of content and contexts and provide feedback on the courses as they develop; • Developing courses using small writing teams working primarily with a curriculum specialist member of the secretariat; • Obtaining feedback through CACs comprising sector and system; representatives, a wide range of classroom teachers, and other experts; • Consulting widely in early developmental stages for each course statement; • The Board endorses the course for implementation.
Standards setting/-Maintenance	Standards identified as scales of achievement based on evidence derived from student work samples and judged by experienced teachers using a paired-comparison process
Assessment arrangements	
Internal	Internal assessment counts for 50% of final results where students undertake the external assessment. If not, then it counts for 100% of the final result.
External	All courses have an external examination, the WACE Examination for both Stages, 2 and 3. All students completing Year 12 and intending to seek selection for university are required to sit for the WACE exams. External assessment counts for 50% of the final result.
Standardised testing	None
Modes that contribute to high-Stakes assessment	**Principles of assessment** School-based assessment of student achievement in all courses is underpinned by the following principles. • Assessment tasks provide accurate and valid information on the knowledge, skills and understandings expected of students. • Assessment makes a positive contribution to student learning. • Assessment procedures are clearly defined and marking keys are specific to the task and provide a clear basis for judgements of student achievement. • Assessment is demonstrably fair to all students and does not

	discriminate on grounds such as gender, disability or ethnicity.
	• Judgements on student achievement are based on multiple assessment tasks of various types.
	A quality school assessment program should ensure that all assessment tasks have the following characteristics.
	• Assessment tasks are consistent, accurate and can be used with different groups of students to produce assessment information.
	• Assessment tasks have the capacity to differentiate student achievement.
	• Assessment tasks are consistent with the content and the assessment requirements of the syllabus.
Moderation	
Type	1) Consensus 2) Statistical 3) Small group
Purpose	1) To ensure that the course standards are being applied consistently. 2) To ensure that judgments of student achievement from external and internal assessments are comparable.
Process	For each course, Course Advisory Committee has responsibility for providing advice on external and school assessment requirements and ensuring that judgments about achievement in both contexts are comparable. Each year, consensus meetings are conducted in a sample of courses (as per negotiation with sectors and systems). The consensus meetings are anticipated to be essential in first year of full implementation and once again during the 5-year accreditation period. Each year, the SCSA collects samples of student work from selected schools. An Assessment and moderation panel views these samples with the aim of verifying teachers' judgments (this is within-school comparability). Adjustments to teachers' ratings will be made if necessary. Results from external assessments will enable the construction of statistical models for the investigation of any systematic bias in school assessments. It is expected that results from school and external assessment will be closely correlated, as they are both assessments of course outcomes. The scales of achievement for course outcomes will provide the external measures for moderation.
Miscellaneous	
Recent reviews and reports	• School Curriculum and Standards Authority report on Vocational Education and Training in Senior Secondary Education Western Australia 2011 • Vocational Education and Training in Senior Secondary Education WA 2010 • Curriculum Framework Review—Executive summary • Curriculum Framework Review—Full report by Professor David Andrich • Meeting the challenge of assessing in a standards based education system—Professor Jim Tognolini • A report to the Curriculum Council regarding assessment for tertiary selection—Professor David Andrich The full transcripts can be found at: *http://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/internet/Publications/Reports/General_Reports*
Current revision/ transition arrangements	**Transition to the WACE 2016** The minimum requirements to receive a WACE in 2016 and beyond are listed below. Achieving a WACE will continue to signify that students have successfully

met the breadth and depth requirements and the achievement standards for the courses they choose.

However, for 2016 and beyond

- Students will need to demonstrate a minimum level of literacy and numeracy based on the skills regarded as essential for individuals to meet the demands of everyday life and work in a knowledge-based economy;
- Students will need to achieve an ATAR or complete a Certificate II or higher. Achieving an ATAR will require students to complete a minimum of four (4) designated ATAR courses at Year 12.

Breadth and depth

Students will complete a minimum of 20 course units or the equivalent. This requirement must include at least:

- A minimum of ten (10) Year 12 units
- Two (2) completed Year 11 English units and one (1) pair of completed Year 12 English units
- One pair of Year 12 course units from each of List A (arts/languages/social sciences) and List B (mathematics/science/technology).

Achievement standard

Achieve a minimum of six (6) C grades in Year 11 units and eight (8) C grades in four (4) pairs of Year 12 units (or equivalents).

There will be provision for students to offset these unit requirements by completing VET qualifications at Certificate I, II, III or IV level. A Certificate I can replace two Year 11 course units, a Certificate II, two Year 11 and two Year 12 units, a Certificate III, two Year 11 and two Year 12 units and a Certificate IV or above, two Year 11 and four Year 12 units.

English language competence

Completion of at least four units of English post Year 10 studied over at least two years. Students will need to demonstrate minimum standards of literacy and numeracy mapped to the Australian Core Skills Framework.